



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

September 2, 2005

The Honorable Margaret Spellings
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Spellings:

Numbers of students across the country planning to attend colleges and universities in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi may experience difficulties upon returning to school due to the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina. With the beginning of the school year at hand, many of these students instead are choosing to attend colleges and universities in their home States. In the midst of the chaos caused by Hurricane Katrina, I hope that the Department of Education will do its part in easing students' transition into the school year.

I am encouraged to learn that the Department is working with funding agencies and private lenders to ensure that students receive needed financial aid as they seek to transfer to another institution from a college that has been distressed by the disaster. I also hope that the Department will accommodate students with college loans so that those affected by Hurricane Katrina would have the appropriate flexibility to make repayments. In addition, the Department should encourage institutions across the country to open their enrollments and waive late fees for those students who cannot attend institutions in troubled areas. The University of Kansas is leading the way in this effort by waiving all late enrollment fees for affected students.

Hurricane Katrina is among the worst natural disasters experienced by the United States in a century. As a Nation, I am confident that we will find ways to work together to ease the suffering of the thousands of people affected, including ways to allow our students to continue their education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Ryun", written over a large, stylized loop.

Jim Ryun
Member of Congress